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Kentucky Farmers Get That Much-Needed Rain

Kentucky Ag Connection - 10/07/2008

Last week, much needed precipitation fell throughout parts of Kentucky. However, much more rainfall was needed to reach normal levels, as some areas received no measurable rainfall. As of Sunday, topsoil moisture was rated as 69 percent very short, 27 percent short and 4 percent adequate. Subsoil moisture was rated 64 percent very short, 27 percent short and 9 percent adequate. Rainfall totaled 0.22 inches, which was 0.53 inches below normal. Temperatures for the week averaged 60 degrees, 2 degrees below normal and 10 degrees cooler than the previous week. Main farm activities for the week were harvesting corn and soybeans. Fieldwork was possible for 6.6 days out of a total 7 days, reports the Kentucky field office of USDA's National Ag Statistics Service.

By Sunday, 60 percent of the corn had been harvested, behind both last year's 88 percent and 72 percent for the five year average. The corn crop was rated 97 percent mature, equal to the five year average. The crop condition was rated 1 percent very poor, 11 percent poor, 31 percent fair, 35 percent good, and 22 percent excellent. Farmers reported that corn lodging has caused losses and is slowing the harvest.

As of Sunday, 18 percent of soybeans were harvested, compared to 30 percent last year and 21 percent for the five year average. Eighty-one percent of soybeans have dropped leaves, compared to 87 percent last year and the five year average of 85 percent. Soybeans reaching the mature stage was at 53 percent, compared to last year's 69 percent and 66 percent for the five-year average. Soybean condition was rated 5 percent very poor, 20 percent poor, 27 percent fair, 29 percent good, and 19 percent excellent.

The condition of housed tobacco was reported as 1 percent very poor, 10 percent poor, 29 percent fair, 45 percent good, and 15 percent excellent. Three percent of tobacco had been stripped, 18 percent was ready for stripping and 79 percent was not ready for stripping. Conditions are too dry for curing, and some producers were applying moisture to bring tobacco into case.

Wheat seeding was proceeding slowly as many farmers continued to wait for additional rainfall to improve germination. Seeding of wheat was rated at 6 percent, behind last year's 10 percent and 12 percent for the five-year average. Producers report they have begun feeding hay due to poor pasture conditions. Hay stocks for the winter are a growing concern for some areas.

Pastures were rated 47 percent very poor, 33 percent poor, 16 percent fair, and 4 percent good.



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